

Veterans Travel Tax Relief Act of 2008

What would this bill do?

- Bill would allow Veterans to receive up to \$400 in tax deductions for travel expenses (such as gas, lodging, food) when they travel to a VA health facility for treatment.
- In order to qualify Veterans must: (1) Live outside of 25 miles from a VA Medical Center where receiving treatment. Currently, VA Medical Centers are in Las Vegas, Reno, Sacramento, Salt Lake City, (2) Reason for travel must be for treatment, examination, surgery of service connected disability. (3) Veterans' yearly income shall not exceed \$75,000 or \$150,000 for a family. *This is the same criteria as the tax refund package passed in January.*

Why is this bill necessary?

- Current law only reimburses veterans a mere 28 cents per mile. This only covers fuel costs and not lodging or food or alternative forms of travel such as flight.
- With gas prices well over \$3.00 a gallon, 28 cents is not adequately helping our veterans.

How many veterans will this help?

- There are more than 300,000 veterans in Nevada, many of whom live in rural communities such as Elko, Winnemucca, and Tonopah where VA health care is not closely available and some need to travel great distances to receive care.
- In 2007 only 10,600 veterans in Nevada received travel reimbursements
 - Some veterans don't qualify for the current program. Others don't know of the program or feel there is no need to seek reimbursement because the very small amount of money is not worth the hassle.
- This bill could help more veterans than the current outdated program and provide better benefits.